



GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

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cover photo by Laurie Lounsbury

GROUNDCOVER NEWS MISSION:

Groundcover News exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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Susan Beckett
Publisher

Consumers devoured the November issue of Groundcover, emptying our shelves with three days left in the month. That selling rate was twice that of the previous month. Thank you to the individuals and religious institutions that helped make that happen

(though here I sit in a panic trying to get the December issue ready a week early!)

Now that we have an office, a phone, filing cabinet and workspace we're starting to feel like a real business. (Our kind hosts at Bethlehem UCC even gave us our own coffee pot!) A recent donation of Office Professional Plus and a printer leaves us just a computer away from being a fully

functional facility.

We have several new, enthusiastic and charming vendors who have hit the ground running. They and new selling opportunities account for the surge in sales. We hope to have a vendor coming soon to your place of worship or favorite store. We'll be there as soon as we receive an invitation!

Letter to the Editor

I'm a dog, a watchdog, and I need to find more dog friends. Though the proposal of "Coordinated Funding" was passed by City Council, Washtenaw County Board and Urban County, it's encouraging that City Administrator Roger Fraser, City Councilman Sabra Briere and County's corporation counsel Curtis Hedger had assured the public that they only voted for the process, not co-mingled funds. There will be no mixing of administration with United Way or AA Area Community Foundation and no money pooling in the future. Sabra even stated that it's illegal to mix taxpayer's money with private donations. We definitely don't want our tax money paying administrative costs, pension, retirement plans, endowment

and private sector investment losses. (Please check the financial reports of the entities involved.)

We need to say "Hurray!!" In the original model, the Office of Community Development had more power over funding decisions. The revised proposal that passed placed limits on OCD's discretionary powers. The model adopted established policy safeguards against procedures which might be employed to misguide human services funds.

To become a good dog, keep a watchful eye on how the Human Services Fund goes. How? We need to attend Urban County monthly meetings. As Ann Arbor yielded the decision-making power of both the Housing and Human

Services Funds last year, advocates should go tell leaders what our underprivileged neighbors need – assurance that the money goes to the right channels. The next meeting will be Tuesday, Dec 14, at the Learning Resource Center on Washtenaw Avenue, from 1:00-3:00 pm.

Want to become a building dog? Come join us at "Religious Coalition for the Homeless." There are over 10 congregations working on a day warming center for the homeless. Besides, we're forming a team of housing advocates to pursue and reclaim our long lost low-income housing, once found in the old YMCA. Many homeless friends with mental illness are still sleeping on the snowy ground. This is an issue of social justice. We

need your hands to build a better community.

Woof-woof, want to become a helping dog? There are several tent cities scattered around Ann Arbor. Some small tent cities require our help. The campers there need propane gas to keep warm in winter. If you can donate, or your church would like to form a "Propane gas Fund," I'd be more than happy to go with you and send propane gas to our homeless neighbors. We welcome any church or individual to join us. You can reach me (Lily) at 734-358-5070 or auwaiching@hotmail.com It will be my honor if I can be my Lord's dog, and you?

Lily Au
Ann Arbor

Standing up and Being a Rainbow Thug

by Boodah the Joker

I am a gay African American Male and I am a Rainbow Thug. I would use my real name but I would like to keep that under wraps. I am a Rainbow Thug for one reason. To show that I tell it like it is. To show the rest of Ann Arbor that there is someone who has the Gay Community's back when there are Hate Crimes being done around town. For all the people who don't like the Gay Community, Watch out because you have a very angry Rainbow Thug on your hands. I am 5'7 250 lbs. and I love to play tackle football. Yes that's right I am gay and I played

football in high school. I came out as gay seven years ago and I am glad that I did.

Now back to the Rainbow Thug deal, some of you maybe wondering "What the hell is a Rainbow Thug?" A Rainbow Thug is a gay individual of any race or nationality who either tells it like it is or takes no crap from anyone who doesn't like the Gay Community. Someone who stands up to the oppressors of the world, who state that if you are gay that you're going to hell if you don't change your ways. I find that kind of funny because the Bible does not state that if you're gay you will go to hell. And if it does state that

then show me exactly where it states that. Rainbow Thugs are a group of individuals who stand for the right thing to do. To show the world that there are individuals who do the right thing and show no fear.

We are a group of gay guys from many different walks of life. Some are hair stylists, realtors, medical case managers, outreach case managers, you name it, there's at least one gay individual working in different professions of the world.

My heart goes out to the individuals in different countries who can't come out of the closet due to the fact that they

fear for their lives. They are the ones who want to be with someone of the same sex for the rest of their lives. Some do it undercover and are not detected by their communities in different countries. If they are found out, they suffer the punishment that is given at the moment and time. I stand for the right thing; I stand for justice for the gay community. I stand for all the good and powerful things in the world.

Ann Arbor, you now have a Rainbow Thug representing the gay community of Washtenaw County.

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D'sT~Time



by Danielle Mack

Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year. I

hope you had a great Thanksgiving. It is my wish and prayer that this is your best Christmas and New Year's so far. Christmas is my favorite time of year. When I was little it always seemed so magical, like anything could happen.

As I grew older and was forced to succumb to the life and gifts of a teenage boy and later that of a young man, Christmas slowly began to lose its luster, and become more and more just another day. I hated that my favorite holiday and number one joy was slowly becoming nothing. Just before I began my transition, there was hardly a spark left in the holiday. I was beginning to dread Christmas. As I began my transformation, Christmas began to have some life in it again and slowly regained its magical, miraculous quality. The life and gifts for a girl or young woman just seemed more fitting for me, and bring more joy than anything. The gift could be the smallest, simplest thing to most women, but to me each one is the sound of angels singing and peace on earth. Please bear this thought in mind if you find yourself shopping for gifts for that special transsexual person on your Christmas list.

Family is something that very few transgendered people have. Those that do have the support of family are lucky, especially

around this time of year. So many families will say they love their transgendered children, but refuse to show it. Families will refuse to have their transgendered child be who they are around them or extended family. Parents tell their children to be true to themselves, to follow their heart, but when that leads them in the direction of transition, parents show their child the door. As this time of year can be a very hard time for any transgendered person, I beg you to show these particular individuals some special attention. Show them some love that they may not be getting from their family.

Female-to-Male

Female to male transsexuals are the group I have the least experience with; they are also the least noticeable of the transsexuals. Transsexual men, also known as ftms or FTM's, are women that are born with the brain of a man and are taking steps towards SRS (Sexual Reassignment Surgery, aka Gender Reassignment Surgery). Transsexual men are to ALWAYS be referred to as men regardless of situation, or your personal feelings, or convictions. Referring to a trans-man as anything other than a man is telling him that you do not respect him as a human being. You may as well just spit in their face (it would probably be easier on them and you if you did). Calling a trans-man a woman or referring to him as such, you are whipping them with a verbal cat of nine tails. Please, if you believe in treating others the way you want to be treated, show compassion to

these hurting souls, show them love and respect by addressing them accordingly. How would you feel as a man if I referred to you as a woman, calling you "her" or "she." Now imagine this pain multiplied to a lifetime's

As I began my transformation, Christmas began to have some life in it again and slowly regained its magical, miraculous quality.

— Danielle Mack

worth, and you have some idea of how they might feel.

Once a woman has been diagnosed as transsexual and begins transition, they are required by their doctors to present at all times as a male, and should be treated as such.

Once a trans-man begins taking testosterone supplements (aka HRT – Hormone Replacement Therapy) changes happen pretty quickly. They begin to develop more muscle mass, a deeper voice, facial hair, body hair, increased sex drive, etc. This is why trans-men tend to

blend in so well and be less noticeable. Trans-men will also bind their breasts down to give the appearance of a flatter chest and help them to better as-

similate into their true gender. After at least a year of living as a man, a trans-man can qualify for SRS. They need to be seeing a psychiatrist, as letters from two separate psychiatrists are required for the surgery. They also need to have been on HRT for at least a year. Throw in a legal name change and a complete change of wardrobe, among other things and it can get quite expensive, even without the surgery.

Homeless trans-men have a much more difficult time than normal men do. Not only are they dealing with employment discrimination based on their gender identity and transition, but also from being homeless. The job market is tough enough already without this added burden. Add to the discrimination the need to pay for things like hormones – some insurance companies will not cover testosterone (it is considered a steroid) – men's clothes to replace all their female clothes, and the trans-man specific clothing. Trans-men need a means to bind their breasts. This could be an ACE bandage, or some breast binder shirts (yes there are shirts made specifically for this). Then there are the prosthetic male parts, that can be extravagant or

simple. Let's not forget the cost of things like the legal name change, in addition to feminine products, and stuff all other homeless men need like razors to shave their face, shaving cream, showers, a warm place to sleep, etc.

Once all these hurdles are jumped there is still the immense cost of the SRS (\$30,000+), and bilateral mastectomy (about \$6,000). For a trans-man, the SRS leaves a lot to be desired. Guys, imagine having permanent ED (Erectile Dysfunction), and needing some sort of additional aid in order to enjoy intimacy with your significant other. Even after surgery a trans-man will always need to take hormonal supplements; the dosage will be less after surgery, but it will still be required.

Next month we will talk about trans-women and what life is like for them, and some of what they go through. I am anxious to get to this topic because it is a subject so near and dear to my heart. Until then, Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Happy Winter Solstice, Happy (insert your religious equivalent to Christmas here), and a Happy New Year to all.

Groundcover Vendors Code of Conduct

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization, and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

Every vendor reads and signs the code of conduct before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

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Saving the world, one life at a time

by Martin Stolzenberg

There is a Talmudic saying, Whoever saves a life, it is considered as if he saved the entire world.

Dr. Jerry Rosenberg saved one life, then another and another, and on and on. For many years he went about saving the world, one life at a time, mostly here in Ann Arbor. These lives were in immediate jeopardy, many were just hours, days or months away from death.

Dr. Rosenberg is one of five founding fathers of the Gift of Life organ transplant program, a non-profit service in the state of Michigan. This organization is now affiliated with nine area hospitals in the state that do transplants including the University of Michigan Medical Center. He and his colleagues reached in and replaced failing, worn out body organs with healthy ones, almost like car repairs, but with a huge dose of compassion.

Reflecting on memorable situations, he reminisced about one of the early transplants he did. "In those years organs were particularly hard to come by," Rosenberg said. "I received a call from Grand Rapids about a young prize fighter who was brain dead from injuries in his latest fight. His parents had consented to have his kidneys donated. I grabbed two medical students and we drove up to Grand Rapids, confirmed the patient was brain dead and harvested the kidneys. We drove back to Detroit with the organs on ice. I transplanted them that night. That was some long day. I was really bushed when it was over. But it sure was gratifying."

That humble start in transplantation is a far cry from the program that now exists.

"I did a handful of kidney transplants the first year. When we started out the success rate was about fifty percent. Now with new drugs to prevent patient organ rejection, the success rate after the first year is over ninety-five percent. This is a wonderful gift."

Today this non-profit program is a \$45 million per year operation. Any profits are plowed back into the program. Gift of Life administrative offices are on Research Park Drive off State Street here in Ann Arbor. This is a modern, up-to-date facility with a staff of 200, including the physicians who operate at various hospitals which perform transplants around the state. There are laboratory technicians who subject donor blood to a variety of tests. Information technologists keep track of all the potential donor and recipient information. There is

a public information department that encourages public support.

Close to 1,000 organs are implanted each year by the Michigan Gift of Life transplant team. There are close to 3,000 awaiting organs in Michigan. While kidneys are still the most frequently implanted organ, the field has now expanded to include livers, pancreas, intestines, lungs and hearts. Anyone, regardless of age or health, can be a donor. Additional donors are still desperately

"I did a handful of kidney transplants the first year. When we started out the success rate was about fifty percent. Now...the success rate after the first year is over 95 percent. This is a wonderful gift."

— Dr. Jerry Rosenberg
Co-founder, Gift of Life

needed. In 2009, 50 potential recipients in Michigan died awaiting organs.

The choice of organ recipients is controlled by the federal government, which developed a series of guidelines that all the regional centers use. A formula based on how long the patient has been waiting for an organ, severity of the ailment, their age (preference is for younger ones so that organs will have a longer life), and the quality of the recipient's immune system are among the key determinant factors in the choice of a recipient. This is done with the aid of a centralized data base.

All of this is a long way to travel from Dr. Rosenberg's humble beginnings in the Bronx, New York. His father owned a small luncheonette in Manhattan. Starting in high school Jerry and his younger brother helped out in the business after school and on weekends. Their father encouraged the boys to get an education. Even while in medical school, Jerry still helped his dad in the luncheonette. Something was going on in that little household in the Bronx. In addition to Jerry's brilliant career, his brother Steven is now Chief of Surgery in the National Cancer

Institute. Their dad could not have imagined how far his boys would travel.

He met his lovely, charming wife, Corliss, while in medical school in Chicago. She was training to be a nurse.

Early in his medical career, Jerry was interested in being a scientist and doing research. But he initially became a general surgeon. As he said, "First and foremost, I learned how to care for people and also the techniques to be a successful surgeon."

After completing a Fulbright Scholarship in the early 1960's in Vienna, he stopped off in England, the country that pioneered transplantation and made inquiries about the field while visiting their laboratories. He explained, "England, because of their many wounded in World Wars I and II, was the preeminent country doing transplantations at that time. I wanted to learn more about it."

Coming back to the United States he continued as a general surgeon for an intensive 10-year period. During that time he began doing transplantations on animals, and eventually humans. That was the start of a distinguished career both in both surgery and transplantation.

After the start of Gift of Life, Jerry came to the University of Michigan to head up the transplant team here, but continued to live in Huntington Woods, Mich., near his family.

This man who was probably born when Herbert Hoover was President no longer operates. But he is co-director of the Gift of Life Laboratory here in Ann Arbor. He helps manage cross-matching between Michigan's donors and the in-state residents on the waiting list. Under his direction the lab also tests the blood of potential donors for infectious diseases.

Talking to such a daunting figure is made easy by Dr. Rosenberg's warm, friendly,

humorous personality. He is vigorous, with an athletic frame, a twinkle in his eye, and a witty quip or story to tell. Jerry is a natty dresser.

Jerry and his wife love to travel. Jerry is multi-lingual; while abroad they often sign up for classes in the language of the country. If you go into an ethnic restaurant in Ann Arbor with the Rosenbergs, in no time he will be amiably chatting in French, Italian or Spanish with the owner or staff.

This talented man also loves wine, classical music, particularly opera, art and was an avid skier until age caught up with him. Corliss is an artist and wonderful cook.

Mostly the Rosenbergs are focused on family. Talk about the apple not falling far from the tree. Son David is Chief of Psychology at the University of Michigan Medical Center. Son Andrew is the head of Internal Care, Cardio-Vascular Department also at the University of Michigan Medical Center. Five years ago the Rosenbergs moved to Ann Arbor to be closer to their family.

This man is one of those unsung, special people we are lucky to have in Ann Arbor. One way this man's personality shows is that after I finished interviewing Jerry, he called me back with one final thought.

He told me, "Gift of Life desperately needs more donors. Please ask people to call the Michigan Organ Donor Registry at 800-492-4881 or sign up online: www.giftoflifemichigan.org."



GETTING TO KNOW GROUNDCOVER

Coming soon to corners near your favorite stores, restaurants and churches are local people working to establish themselves economically, selling *Groundcover – News and Solutions from the Ground Up*.

This street newspaper, published monthly, contains an eclectic mix of material with a broad range of appeal. It is sold exclusively by members of the greater homeless community.

The newspaper costs \$1 and the seller reaps a net profit of 75 cents on each paper. Certified vendors will be wearing nametags with their name and Groundcover ID number.

When you see a Groundcover vendor, please stop, ask about the paper and its content, and buy one. The paper is about establishing commerce in social interaction as well as route to self-sufficiency.



Jeffrey Sachs, Colombia professor and renowned economist, who recently spoke about climate change at the University of Michigan.

by Susan Beckett

Civilizations have collapsed and disappeared throughout human history, but now that all nations are so interconnected, will the climate change-induced catastrophe be the ultimate demonstration of the effects of globalization? Paralyzed by the political poison of proposing any new tax or impediment to the business climate, U.S. leaders are escorting us down that path.

As the Climate Change Summit opened in Cancun, Colombia professor and world renowned economist Jeffrey Sachs addressed these questions at Rackham auditorium. Noting that climate change gets attention in the U.S. only to attack and defeat members of Congress, the Oak Park native asserted that the summit offers almost no prospects of progress. The international meeting in Japan for a convention on biological diversity failed to make even the back pages of U.S. newspapers, though we are now in the midst of the sixth great extinction and the only one caused by a species. The U.S. never signed

Jeffrey Sachs discusses global climate change: Politics, Policy and Survival

the Kyoto Treaty and no progress has been made on the goal set in 2002 to slow biodiversity loss by 2010.

Those representatives who serve in split districts and recently voted to limit carbon emissions, will not be returning next year. Since the Climate Change bill was defeated in the Senate, the U.S. remains without any plan whatsoever to change our path of destruction. Sachs' biggest criticism of the current administration is its decision to pursue horse trading with Congress instead of formulating a comprehensive energy policy.

He maintains that until climate change no longer threatens corporate interests, they will relentlessly undermine the science and the solutions. Corporate propaganda was clearly exposed in the uproar over hydrocarbons and ozone depletion, which industry scientists loudly dismissed as liberal alarmist nonsense until one hydrocarbon-producing company scientist discovered an alternative to Freon. Suddenly, the hole in the ozone existed and moving away from hydrocarbons was urgent.

Population growth and the rapid economic growth of developing countries mean that rather than merely curtailing our current consumption, we must move completely away from polluting energy sources. Already, at 387 parts per million (ppm) of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, we surpass the 350 ppm level at which the paleoclimate records reveal ocean levels 10 -30 meters higher than they are today. (We were at 280 ppm prior to the industrial revolution.) The average temperature has already risen eight-tenths of a degree and as the ice sheets melt, the earth loses its reflectivity and so absorbs more heat, causing temperatures to rise further. Other intensifying effects include increasing degassing

and release of carbon dioxide from the ocean at higher water temperatures and the release of methane from the permafrost as it warms. Climate change is now occurring with only the pacing in doubt.

Since 1978, China has averaged 10 percent economic growth per year, resulting in a 30-fold increase to date. Within 20 years, China will displace the U.S. as the world's largest economy. (They are already the biggest trading partner of most countries.) With emissions tightly coupled to GNP, one can see the additional difficulty of reducing emissions during a period of rapid economic growth. Combining the economic aspirations of the planet with planetary sanity is the global sustainable development challenge. Only the Scandinavian countries are close to limiting their carbon footprint to an environmentally sustainable level while providing a good standard of living for their people.

Many of the very poor already live in ecologically marginal environments where flooding and droughts contribute to their endemic poverty. As sea levels rise and weather patterns shift and threats to their homes and livelihoods intensify, conflicts are more likely to erupt. One ray of hope is in the economic value of deserts providing solar electricity.

Sachs' plan for saving the planet calls for energy efficiency combined with decarbonization of energy. For example, renewable and nuclear energy, which now supply one-fifth of energy consumed in the U.S., must increase to 50 percent, while petroleum generated energy shrinks from its current level of 40 percent down to 10 percent by the year 2050. Carbon capture and sequestration, basically taking carbon dioxide out of the air and storing it in large undersea caverns, could also help. He is

skeptical of biofuels' utility since their production competes with food production and nature and exacerbates other ecological problems like the dead zones along the Gulf of Mexico and other river mouths where fertilizer runoff has left the water with insufficient life-supporting oxygen.

It all comes down to money. Energy from the highly polluting sources is also the least expensive, at six cents/kilowatt hour (kwh) for coal compared to 10 cents/kwh for a renewable source. Moving to clean sources will reduce the growth of GNP, but by less than one percent if it is done over time by replacing obsolete, polluting facilities with state of the art, clean energy producing facilities.

To reduce the immediate impact on industry, Sachs suggests a subsidy for clean energy sources that puts them at a competitive cost to petroleum and coal. Concurrently, he suggests adding a tiny consumer tax on energy consumption that gradually increases. As the tax increases, the subsidy decreases and by 2050 the intensity of our energy emissions will be reduced by about 83 percent.

Of course, this assumes an environment in which the institution of a tax or the suggestion of slower growth is not the equivalent of political suicide. Sachs urges us to consider our subjective well-being, which does not really improve once our basic health and comfort needs are met; calling into question how much wealth we really need, especially when the part of the cost is the continued viability of human life on the planet. Perhaps our best chance for survival is having China assume world leadership quickly, as their system of government can implement prudent policy regardless of the opinions of its people.

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Laurie Lounsbury
Editor

Holiday traditions have roots in pagan beliefs

"Deck the halls with boughs of holly, fa-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la ..."

Let me interpret that much-loved lyric from a popular holiday

song: The first part means, "Hang lots of greenery in your homes so the woodland fairies, who are freezing their wings off, can roost indoors during the coldest time of year."

The next part, "Fa-la-la-la-la-la-la-la," translated loosely means, "Break out the punch bowls and fill them with 80-proof wassail, it's PARTY TIME!"

Yes, almost all of our treasured holiday traditions have their roots not in Christianity, but in ancient paganism. Christ wasn't even a twinkle in Mary's eye when Yuletide festivities began.

The ancient pagans fine-tuned the practices of good will, peace and partying at least 2,000 years before the birth of Christ, who, according to religious historians, wasn't even born in December.

Pagans were the original sufferers of Seasonal Affective Disorder. They went into a state of unbridled panic when

their beloved sun started disappearing in the winter months.

In a massive effort to woo the sun back, the pagans gave lots of parties in its honor. The Scandinavians called it Hweolor-tid, which means "the turning time." The name eventually changed to Yuletide, because the proud, Celtic pagans sounded like idiots when they tried to speak Swedish.

The mead and ale flowed freely at early pagan winter celebrations, where they gathered round the burning Yule log and roasted chestnuts. After breaking several teeth on chestnuts, they invented marshmallows.

The early Christians didn't cotton to all the pagans' revelry, but old habits die hard, and the sun-loving pagans weren't inclined to give up their traditions in favor of a more subdued, sober acknowledgment of Christ.

Around 340 A.D., Pope Julius came up with the perfect solution, declaring that Jesus was officially born on Dec. 25 and henceforth, all merrymaking would be done as a birthday celebration.

It was not a big deal, just a minor adjustment to the pagan social calendars, and no one seemed to mind since they were having too much fun to worry about the tiny deception.

Winter solstice traditions come from all over the world. It was the Druids who gave us the mistletoe tradition. From



The tradition of sending men deep into the forest to whack down a behemoth tree for the Yule Log was invented by English housewives who wanted to sit around and drink the newest microbrewed mead without their husbands nagging them to get the haggis on the table.

Scandinavia down through Europe, everyone agreed that fighting battles without the benefit of not-yet-invented night vision goggles was no fun, so the Druids called a truce during the winter

solstice. Enemies banded together against their common foes – cold, dark, days and nights – and shared some high-spirited caroling and wassail consumption. As a gentle reminder, mistletoe was hung in doorways, and enemies were expected to embrace in peace under the mistletoe when they entered a home. The homophobic warriors weren't crazy about the system, so they started picking fights with women so they could kiss and make up under the mistletoe.

The Second Temple in Jerusalem was the home of yet another seasonal display of feasting and lights. According to legend, the Jews had only enough sacred oil to burn the eternal flame for one day, but as the Jews celebrated a recent victory, the flame miraculously burned for eight days on a very small amount of oil. Those Jews were promptly hired to work in product development for energy efficient cars at Toyota.

Since holiday traditions originated from all corners of the planet, and from a wide variety of beliefs, the holiday season should be a time of tolerance for those of different beliefs. It all began with one thing in mind: It's better to spend dark, cold times in the presence of candles, bonfires, and the joyous company of others, regardless of their faith, politics or lifestyle.

It's in the Socks

by Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell, Pastor,
Bethlehem United Church of Christ

Winter weather thickens with days growing colder and shorter. Often in faith communities, like Bethlehem UCC where I serve, we take collections of items that will help people keep warm now. Hundreds of hats and pairs of mittens, socks, and shoes will be gathered all over Ann Arbor and made available to those who need them. This year I am thinking especially about the socks.

When I was growing up in upstate New York and Vermont, I spent many months in cozy wool socks. I frequently received new socks for my September birthday right at the beginning of the school year. I usually lined up those socks in the closet sometime in September. Then I was all set for the coming winter.

Many seasons of school passed in New

York, Vermont, and Massachusetts. Those are all states where wool socks mean warm feet in the winter. And then at twenty-five, I moved to Saint Louis where summers were longer and hotter and winters shorter and milder. The first September I was there, as was my custom, I organized my wool socks for the cooler weather ahead. A friend thought it was a senseless gesture since it was in the 90's that September day. He couldn't believe I would need all those wool socks in Saint Louis. I didn't, and before too many years passed, I had a few pair of cotton socks and no wool socks at all.

Last summer I arrived in Ann Arbor and I have gladly lined up a new set of wool socks for the cold months. I am aware of how comforting a good pair of wool socks feels. I lived very well in Saint Louis without them but I never stopped missing them. I feel grounded with them on my

feet. It is good to be wearing them again. I have come full circle with my favored wool socks.

A few days ago when pulling on a pair of wool socks, I thought about the Groundcover vendors I am getting to know at Bethlehem UCC and around town. Collectively, they have dwelt in many challenging twists and turns. There are stories of previous lives, past security, and a state of being settled. These have all been lost in a series of hard transitions. There is often sadness, pain, and regret. Into that mix, in this new time, Groundcover comes on the scene. As small-scale entrepreneurs, vendors are courageously putting the pieces of life back together. They are working at modestly supporting themselves and finding fresh sources of hope and security. Some have come up with very inventive ways of carrying their papers around town. One paper at a time, they are building

what is familiar and safe. They are coming full circle again to more sufficient warmth in their lives.

The November 2010 issue of the paper sold out in record time. Every copy of that paper was sold by one vendor or another at a street corner, outside a faith community, on the day of a big event, or in the midst of busy shoppers. Every copy of that paper is making possible a return to what will sustain lives and empower people. In the coming cold and inclement weather, vendors will have to muster sturdy spirits to sell out the next issue and the issue after that one. But they are invested, by the Groundcover route, in getting their day-to-day life on more stable footing.

Every morning when I put on my wool socks, I will remember the vendors I am getting to know. And I will be grateful for the determined example and real possibility they are spreading among us.

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

SOS responds to changing crises through the years

Responding to escalating hallucinogen-related emergencies and suicides in the sixties, a 24-hour crisis line was established on the Eastern Michigan University campus and dubbed the SOS Crisis Line. In the 40 years since, SOS has continually evolved, responding to the pressing needs of the day. People call in about shelter and food crises today. This year, 50 percent of the people being served have never before been to SOS for help.

Emergency food, tutoring, therapy and walk-in counseling services at the Octagon Housing Crisis Center are now all provided by SOS, along with the still-functioning crisis line. Depending on availability, families can stay in SOS emergency housing apartments for up to three months while they receive intensive support services to help them obtain and sustain permanent housing. They shelter 60 families each year in this way, including 100 children.

Some of these families join families from other county shelters in making the move to one of the 16 transitional housing units provided by SOS. The SOS model is unique in that these 16 units are scattered throughout Washtenaw County in privately owned buildings. The family contributes 30 percent of their income toward rent and SOS makes up the difference and provides intensive case management services, children's services and employability supports.

Housing First is an alternative to traditional options for providing shelter to homeless families and is predicated on the belief that serious problems like mental illness and addiction are most readily resolved when housing is secure and a supportive routine can be established. It also reduces trauma for children in homeless families, enabling them to get back on a regular schedule, catch up with vaccinations, and concentrate in school.

The Housing First Program rapidly moves homeless families into permanent, affordable housing instead of prolonging a family's

experience in temporary shelters. SOS tailors supportive services to meet the needs of each family to help them increase their skills in job readiness, parenting and household management. Of the 24 families living in transitional housing units, 20 maintained their housing beyond two years. Families in the program have shown significant improvements in their income, education, and family stability. Housing is available based on current funding and vouchers.

Managing their housing units and providing comprehensive services to children of homeless families are among the greatest challenges faced by SOS, along with the ever-pressing need for more funds and resources. Finding safe and affordable childcare that includes transportation can be a challenge for anyone, let alone a parent dealing with crisis. SOS offers Time for Tots — a free therapeutic daycare for infants and pre-school children — to homeless parents participating in a local shelter program in Washtenaw County. A very low child-to-adult ratio enables staff to form close bonds with the children and their families, helping them to model appropriate parenting and deal with the violence and abuse that often accompany the lack of housing autonomy.

Time for Tots provides a nurturing place for children so their parents can search for permanent housing, find a job or get connected to the resources they need to regain stability in their lives. It also gets the children fast-tracked for enrollment in Headstart.

SOS counselors assist parents in advocating for their children in the public schools and in selecting appropriate day care programs when they leave the SOS programs. Older children can get their first employment experience through SOS.

When people first called the crisis line because they had nowhere to



SOS volunteers and staff member (seated) distribute Thanksgiving turkeys from Octagon House.

sleep, SOS staff invited them to sleep in the Octagon Crisis Center. Families crowded into small rooms while single men slept in the common rooms and hallways that staff used during the day. As the need persisted and grew, they sought more viable solutions.

Then, as now, they often had to transport people as far as Toledo and Jackson so they could find a place to spend the night. Over time, they realized there were structural impediments to certain people finding housing or temporary shelter and they set out to fill the gap.

As they worked with families, it became apparent that the children needed more than the child care they were providing so they brought in therapists to help the children with the uncertainty of their lives and tutors to help fill in the educational gaps that occur with frequent absences and school changes. This expanded as they brought in University of Michigan students who run a creative arts and literacy program at SOS.

Volunteers play a big role at SOS in the food program, working with children as after school tutors, summer activity leaders, Girl Scout troop leaders, and in the crisis center once they have completed a training program. Community members who adopt a family help with furnishing apart-

ments and holiday presents.

A major concern for SOS director Faye Askew King is an impending decrease in shelter funding at a time when need is increasing. The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEART bill), currently under consideration in Congress, has the laudable goal of moving homeless families back into permanent housing within one month. The problem is that funds for emergency housing will be usurped to build more affordable housing which will be problematic in the short term.

SOS owns and manages six units in an apartment building that it uses to stabilize families excluded from government-subsidized housing and need of supportive services. For example, if a parent and children live in federally subsidized housing and the other parent, who has been incarcerated for a felony is released, they have to move if they want to re-unite their family. Another situation might involve persons who need their medication intake monitored for several months until they are once again stable.

SOS also works with Ypsilanti landlords to find low-income housing for clients. In one large complex, SOS manages 16 units that they use for transitional housing as part of the Housing First program. Units are subsi-

dized so for the first two years, the occupant contributes 30 percent of their income. After that, if they can afford the full rent and wish to stay, they remain in that unit and continue on in a normal rental relationship with the landlord.

The scarcity of emergency and low-income housing relative to the need impelled SOS, Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN, Alpha House) and the Staples Family Center to work together to streamline services. Families in need now call SOS from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and IHN from 6 p.m. to midnight to get their immediate needs met and be put on the appropriate wait list for a longer term solution. Help provided can include eviction prevention, utility assistance, and relocation assistance.

The SOS website, soscs.org, lists low-cost housing options in the area along with their requirements and pertinent information.

Housing Crisis Center
114 North River
Ypsilanti, MI 48198

Housing Crisis Line:
(734) 484-4300

Walk-In Hours:
Mon., Thurs., Fri.: 9 am - 4 pm
Tues.: 9 am - 6:30 pm
Wed.: noon - 4 pm

A diagnosis of epilepsy led to living on the streets for vendor Miriam

Miriam first heard about Groundcover while eating dinner at the Delonis Center. Organizers were trying to determine if there was sufficient interest in starting a street newspaper. She was intrigued. She joined in a photo shoot on her way out and once her picture appeared in an ad and on the masthead, her allegiance to Groundcover was cemented.

She quickly embraced the Groundcover mission.

"I've been homeless before and self-esteem is important," she said. "I'm blessed and it's given me more self-esteem." She also values how Groundcover has become a mutually supportive community and reports she has been "keeping an eye" on another vendor. "He's not a bad person. He just has a drinking problem. This paper's giving him self-esteem and he's doing better, getting help. I'm learning from Tony how to sell even better."

"I've been selling since issue one and I like it," Miriam continued. "I enjoy talking to a variety of people and what it does for the homeless. I amazd at the readers' curiosity and anticipation for future issues. Our last issue sold out in two weeks! I'm looking forward to being out there in the rain and sleet. I've got my snowsuit, umbrella, gloves, boots and laminated sign and I'm happy to do it. I feel Groundcover is my job so I'm making my own uniform. I'm so proud of Groundcover! Each month, out of my own money, I try to add something to my business equipment." She has already added a cooler and cart for transporting and protecting her papers, her sign, and Groundcover sweatshirts in a variety of colors she had custom made for her at Elmo's.

"I am an entrepreneur," Miriam declared, "and a self-educated woman." Her last venture was Nawnies Dog Gone Hot Dogs, named by her grandkids. A loss of peripheral vision, a side-effect of the anti-seizure medication she has taken since infancy, left her legally blind and unable to drive. From 2006 until 2008 she employed a driver to haul her hot dog stand to the U-M Diag, where she often cleared \$200 - \$300 on a weekend day. Once she

"I want to be successful more than anything... I'm looking forward to being out there in the rain and sleet, selling Groundcover."

— Vendor Miriam

no longer had a reliable driver, her hot dog stand went idle, though she still has all her permits and hopes to get it out again.

Diagnosed with epilepsy at birth, Miriam's life normalcy ended after third grade when she was committed to Pontiac State Hospital. Epilepsy was considered a mental illness in the 1950's and no attempt was made to further educate her. Miriam continued her own education by reading the Merriam Webster Dictionary she found in the hospital. There were no educational opportunities when she was transferred to the hospitals in Ionia or Cato, so at 18 she ran away.

She lived on the streets in Saginaw, Oakland County, California and Pontiac. A man attempted to rob her in Pontiac and she sprayed him with the bleach she carried in a spray bottle for self-protection. She was arrested for felonious assault with an illegal substance and spent seven years in prison. It was during this time she was declared legally blind and given her first cane. She was released in 2004 to the custody of her daughter who lives in Washtenaw County and now lives in her own apartment in Ypsilanti, delighting in visits with her grandchildren.

"I want to be successful and more than anything, I want to see Groundcover be successful, because it is tells the truth," Miriam said. "So people should unharden their hearts. People need to have shelter in all weather, not just when its colder than 40 degrees."



Above: Vendor Miriam, who was diagnosed with epilepsy as a child and put into an institution at a time when the disease was considered a mental illness

Below: Miriam's homemade sign, displayed by her stack of newspapers

"EXTRA, EXTRA, READ ALL ABOUT IT"

The Ground Cover News Paper Is Designed To Help Homeless People Have a Real Place To Lay Their Heads Other Then On Our Streets. And Who Knows, We May Just be Giving Back To Some of The United States Homeless, A Little Self-esteem

For \$1.00 YOU CAN
> HELP <

The legend lives on at Downtown Home and Garden

Paying attention to detail is rewarded when ambling around Downtown Home and Garden. Among the treasures are virgin maple, Bay City milled flooring, the original Fleetwood Diner sign, and an old grain elevator that once dispensed mixed seeds for feeding farmyard birds. Rumor has it that vestiges of those old seeds are still in the chute. A tour of the basement reveals the last horse stalls in downtown Ann Arbor.

The building has been in continuous use supplying farmers and gardeners since circa 1906 and the persistence of the building and business model earned the admiration of owner Mark Hodesh. He originally acquired them back in 1975 from Emma, Herman and Gotleib Hertler. The store was being run then by 89-year-old Emma and her nephew, George. Michigan was suffering from factory closings in the early 70's and downtown Ann Arbor was more populated by blowing newspapers and vagrants than active shoppers and diners; families did not venture there. Briarwood was new and shopping malls reigned.

With more than 11 vacancies on Main St., property prices were low enough for young guys to buy in. Hodesh's first downtown business was the Fleetwood Diner which he founded when he was 26, after apprenticing at Red's Rite Spot, a 13-seat diner run by Red Shelton and eventually displaced by the Tower Inn. Back then you could get a quality breakfast at the Fleetwood for less than a dollar. Even then, Hodesh believed in quality ingredients and buying locally.

"The eggs were from Bilby's Farm, the toast bread came from the Modern Bakery in Detroit- best bread you could get back then, and the jam came from Smuckers, and none of that mixed fruit, either," Hodesh said.

Emma Hertler must have recognized his appreciation of quality and history, because according to Hodesh, she bestowed the company on him.

"Sell it to him, Georgie; he's a good boy. He gets up early," she reputedly commanded her nephew. Hodesh kept the name Hertler Brothers and made money his first year. He shrewdly

purchased the lot next door and made it into the store parking lot. Business grew 500 percent in five years.

Hodesh and his wife, artist Margaret Parker, found another business opportunity in the Castine Inn in Maine at a time they were ready for a change. They sold the Hertler Brothers name and business and moved to the Inn located on Penobscot Bay, north of Bar Harbor. Parker appreciated the light in Maine where the blues were bluer and it sparkled like Greece. She created large pieces of art for the Inn and Castine School while they were there.

Hertler Brothers faltered in the late 1990's, and faced with the prospect of an abandoned building on the property they still owned, Hodesh and Parker elected to return to Ann Arbor in 1997 and restore the business, though they no longer had rights to the name. The renamed Downtown

Home and Garden again prospered under their ownership. Like today, it was a time of gardening resurgence with an emphasis on organic gardening.

Parker redesigned the parking lot, transforming it into a popular location for weddings and parties when the store is closed. She also does advertising covers, including those for their store, and is a member of the Commission on Art and Public Places. She was recently honored at the Grand Rapids Art Prize competition for her entry "C'ood," a piece 10 feet high and 24 feet in diameter. It was constructed with help from volunteers and made from donated t-shirts; very fitting for a work whose name is a contraction of "Common Good." A great interactive piece, it is looking for a home, either indoors or out, for as long as it lasts.

She may be doing some more design work this summer since Hodesh recently purchased the lot on the northwest corner of his building that once sported a parking structure exit ramp. Look for more on this project in an upcoming issue of Ground-cover.

Hodesh is not sentimental about the business but likes being part of downtown Ann Arbor. The grittiness is part of the appeal, as is the sturdiness of the building. The store is a small infrastructure project with heating and hot water systems sized



for a house. In the winter, they wear more sweaters. In the summer, an awning protects the store from direct sun.

Through good times and bad, the store's foundation proved solid: Plant a seed, grow a plant, harvest, cook and can it. The products carried today are similar to those stocked for the last 100 years. The town has changed and today's patrons are more urban gardener than farmer, but just like his earlier Hertler Brothers and Fleetwood customers, they have their eyes wide open and are ready to appreciate something good.

Top: Downtown Home and Garden owner Mark Hodesh prepares to climb a vintage rolling ladder to check on his inventory. **Right:** Art titled "C'ood" on display, created by Hodesh's wife, Margaret Parker. The piece was recently honored in the Grand Rapids Art Prize competition.



PUZZLES

Sudoku

4puz.com

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 1 | | | 3 | | | 6 | | |
| 4 | | | | 8 | 3 | | 1 | |
| 2 | 6 | | | | | | | |
| | 8 | 6 | | | | 7 | | |
| | | | 2 | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | 4 | 3 | | | |
| | | | | | 9 | 2 | | |
| 3 | 5 | 7 | | | | 6 | | |
| 7 | | | 1 | | | 3 | | |

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Cryptoquotes

Figure out the encryption code to solve the puzzle

| ACROSS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Name Those Lyrics | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | | | | | | | | | 15 | | | | | 16 |
| 17 | | | | | | | | 18 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 19 | | | | | | 20 | | | |
| | 21 | 22 | 23 | | | | | | 24 | 25 | 26 | | | |
| 27 | | | | | 28 | | | | | | | | | |
| 29 | | | | 30 | | 31 | | | | | 32 | 33 | 34 | |
| 35 | | | | 36 | 37 | | | | | | 38 | | | |
| 39 | | | 40 | | | | | | 41 | | | | | |
| | | 42 | | | | | 43 | 44 | | 45 | | | | |
| 49 | 50 | | | | | | 51 | | | | | | | |
| 52 | | | 53 | 54 | 55 | | | | | | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 |
| 60 | | | | | | | | 61 | | | | | | |
| | 62 | | | | | | | 63 | | | | | | |
| DOWN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Group of whales | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | O ____? (Srsly? No wai. Ya wai!) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Back of a ship | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Big mouth | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | To cry (Esperanto) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Florence art museum | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | South Seas garment | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | Holiday ____, Bing Crosby movie | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Gross minus expenses | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | European time zone (abbr.) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | |
| 14 | | | | | | | | | 15 | | | | | | |
| 17 | | | | | | | | 18 | | | | | | | |
| | | | | 19 | | | | | | | 20 | | | | |
| | 21 | 22 | 23 | | | | | | | 24 | 25 | 26 | | | |
| 27 | | | | | | 28 | | | | | | | | | |
| 29 | | | | 30 | | 31 | | | | | | | | | |
| 35 | | | | 36 | 37 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 39 | | | 40 | | | | | | 41 | | | | | | |
| | | 42 | | | | | | 43 | 44 | | 45 | | | | |
| 49 | 50 | | | | | | 51 | | | | | | | | |
| 52 | | | 53 | 54 | 55 | | | | | | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | |
| 60 | | | | | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 62 | | | | | | | 63 | | | | | | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| 11. Subcutaneous swelling | 38. Exterminate |
| 12. Beg | 43. Imbue |
| 13. Asian holidays | 44. The bad guys in <i>The Matrix</i> |
| 16. "Be quiet!" | 46. Sports venue |
| 18. <i>Du grünst nicht nur zur Sommerszeit, nein auch im Winter, wenn es schneit.</i> | 47. Raw, as a gemstone |
| 21. Arousing doubt | 48. Japanese seaport |
| 22. Walk right in | 49. U.K. pharmaceutical company (abbr.) |
| 23. Weaving machine | 50. Throat-clearing sound |
| 24. Stringed instrument | 53. Big success |
| 25. Myself also | 54. King of Wessex during the 8th century |
| 26. Troubleshoot software | 55. For each |
| 27. Rocker Joan | 56. Kidnappers of Patty Hearst (abbr.) |
| 30. Pertaining to Benedict XVI | 57. Group of western nations (abbr.) |
| 32. Blotch | 58. Civilian contractor of the federal government (abbr.) |
| 33. Door, in French | 59. Cable TV channel (abbr.) |
| 34. If they "have it," the motion passes | |
| 36. Alternative nickname for Gerry, maybe | |
| 37. Small bottle | |

solutions on page 13

UA WXRDCRTC LSDOORZWR SDT MRRZ CV LSDZWR CSR UFZITRC
 VJ HRVHOR. UFZITRCT HODA TCXDZWR CXFLET VZ YT. QR TRR
 CSFZWT CSR QDA VYX UFZIT SDBR FZTCXYLCRI VYX RART CV TRR.
 – UYSUUUDI AYZYT

Groundcover Wish List

Locking storage cabinet
 4-drawer file cabinet
 Computers and equipment
 Adobe Creative Suite software
 Handcarts, rolling coolers or rolling suitcases for newspaper transport
 Waterproof bags
 Office supplies like receipt books, paper and laminating pouches
 Digital cameras, or cell phones with cameras
 Volunteer writers, office staff, and social workers
 Jobs for hard workers
 If you have something to donate, please let us know.
 contact@groundcovernews.com



Bethlehem
United Church of Christ
 423 S. Fourth Avenue,
 Ann Arbor, MI 48104
 (between William and Packard)
www.bethlehem-ucc.org
 (734) 665-6149

Sundays:
 8:30 am ~ Choir
 8:30 am and 10:00 am ~ Worship
 9:00 am ~ Confirmation Class
 10:00 am ~ Church School
 10:00 am ~ Young Adult Forum
 11:30 am ~ Youth Fellowship

Upcoming Events:
 November 28 thru December 23 ~ Stories of the Season
 6:30 pm in the Lounge
 December 4 ~ Hanging of the Greens ~ 9:00 am
 December 5 ~ Advent Workshop ~ 11:15 am
 December 12 ~ Christmas Caroling ~ 3:00 pm
 December 19 ~ Children's Christmas Program ~ 4:00 pm
 December 21 ~ "Longest Night" Service ~ 7:00 pm
 December 24 ~ Services at 5:00, 7:30 and 11:00 pm
 December 26 ~ one worship service at 10:00 am
an invitation to grow in spirit and serve with joy



Hope keeps us going –a first person short story

by Fiona Owens

April 2010, After reading Anne Lamott

At this particular moment, life is like a bleak change-of-season day, cold windy grey clouds low over everything. New MS symptoms plague my husband Michael's legs, which are cramping, especially the left one, causing them to spring into the air from the force of the contractions, like a sharp kick. His left side suffers more than his right, for undetermined reasons.

I am reminded of my grandmother, Flora, after her stroke. Flora's entire right side was paralyzed from foot to head, as if a line had been drawn segmenting her body. She could use her left arm, but her right was in a sling; her right leg was braced so she balanced her weight on the left. As if in a partial lunar eclipse, one half of her body was in darkness, the other half still in light.

Michael's suffering does not include paralysis, but his symptoms do seem to favor sides. I wonder if other MS patients experience this dichotomy. My younger son tells me that nothing about the brain is straightforward, because it is complicated in its functions and structure. But the mystery remains as to why MS operates in its idiosyncratic way. While researchers study and debate, Michael lives with neurologic pain, bouts of intermittent jerking, myoclonic slaps and head clips, utterances almost like Tourette's, memory loss, balance issues, collapsing hips, loss of vision, double vision, numbness, fatigue and brain

fog, et al. A day in the life.

Our de facto physician is the Internet, for less serious complaints and suggestions for physical therapy. We look things up, run questions by MS forum members who include physicians also suffering from the disease, search books and websites for the latest advice we can implement from home. Lately, Michael has been sitting through hot baths, even though the baths make him more symptomatic. Warm water eases his cramping muscles enough so he can sleep. We both yearn for a cure, especially following Easter weekend when, on Saturday night, Michael was up until 5 a.m. pacing the floors, bashing himself in the head with forceful blows so frequent and intense that his face was bruised.

These jerks come on suddenly and without warning. In a burst of physical strength remaining from his days as a wrestler, Michael's still strong arms swing with great force toward his head or often together, in a hard clap. He can delay it, at times, with much concentration; he attempts to do so in public places. The effort has cost, as when he finally does relax, he experiences an especially intense reaction.

All this suffering is gloomy, clouds hovering over the head gloomy. A friend asked me how we cope. Howard Zinn, the recently deceased historian, said in any essay against discouragement that "the lesson of history is that you must not despair; if you persist, things will change."

We do feel overwhelmed at times. I have to remind myself to get up and keep moving. Still it is hard to let go of the idea that with the right combination of action and luck, the reality of illness and the financial stress that accompanies it will wonderfully disappear.

Many years ago, my mother gave me a set of Anne of Green Gables books, the story of a young Canadian girl who was adopted by an unmarried older brother and sister. Anne, in first arriving at Matthew and Marilla's farm to live, had a habit of speaking in a flip way about her life, using melodramatic speech to underscore her personal trials. She called herself despairing, a word upon which Marilla pounced: "To despair is to forsake God," she said, quickly and with much seriousness.

Do not fear for us, dear friend. Of course, sometimes events send me crying to my room. I sit in the parking lot before work and struggle to map out each day; Michael needs medications or exercise, and someone with whom to express his grief or just chat. I need to handle a myriad of tasks. But I can't afford to give up. As Jewell sings "I won't be made useless, won't be idle with despair." Who will care for Alex and Noah if I cannot? Who will care for Michael?

Beyond these domestic worries lie deeper responses. Hope is not only detaching the negative prefix "dis" from the word "courage." I know another day is coming, perhaps one with more cares, but arriving

nonetheless. We will be all right. We are all right. Another set off bills in the mail. An unexpected problem. I feel depleted and crabby. Then someone makes a joke and we find ourselves laughing and feeling whole.

We carry our sorrows forward in our cupped hands, learning as we go that we cannot hold them all in the leaky bowl our interlaced fingers make, and perhaps the fact we have to give up and let some go is part of our salvation.

And then, there is the need to sustain order. I will water the peonies and the rhubarb even if soon we will have to leave the house they border. I will buff the car to a golden gleam before I return it to the lease company.

This is our place on the planet. It should be tended to, for at least these moments; hope is not the spring season of the heart. Instead, it is all the many weeks beforehand, when, done with winter's show and impatient for the end of heavy weather, we believe, even though no sign indicates as much, that the year will once again turn. It isn't clear when. We sit on our porches and wait. We look to the fields and sky. Then, one day, the rains begin, to cleanse and renew, and the marshy ground remembers. The days bring color and light. And spring happens.

Poems for the times

Mass anxiety

by David KE Dodge

Twilight shadows
Softening contours
Mottled colors
Whites and gray;

Distant sounds
And distant passions
These the sense
Of end of day.

Silent people
Turning homeward
For their night
And from their day;

For the evening
For the night time
Apprehensions
Black and gray.

Act IV

by Dan Sloan 2007

In the depths of my own depravity
A car stopped.

I witnessed an act,
A woman emerged.

An act beyond me at the time.
She placed a blanket upon the
person asleep on the bench,
Got into the car and left.

Looking out my window
I didn't weep at the time though I
should have
It was the most beautiful thing
I've ever seen.

Onto a chill winter city street
An unfortunate slept on a bench.
Drug addict or drunk I didn't
know.
Man or woman I didn't know.

Olympian Carl Lewis sets his sights on new goal

He competed in five Olympic Games, won nine gold medals and was named Olympian of the century by Sports Illustrated. Now Carl Lewis is setting his sights on an even bigger goal: to help end hunger. In an exclusive interview with SNS he explains why.

by Adam Sennott

From athletic diets to fighting hunger. It might not seem an obvious fit, but for Carl Lewis it felt like a logical move. Upon finishing his sports career, the nine time Olympic gold medalist who competed in track and field decided to use his fame for greater goals. In 2009 he became a so-called 'Goodwill Ambassador' to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations.

His aims, he declared at the time, were to change the global attitude towards how poverty affects the world and help poorer countries become more self-sufficient.

Lewis, who won his last Olympic gold medal in 1996, says he realized he had to take action while on a trip to India. He wondered how the locals could cope with all the poverty visible on the street.

"I was talking to the general manager of the hotel, and I said 'you know, you drive past these people every day and they're hungry, and they're homeless, and they don't have anything,'" Lewis said. "How do you do it, and just keep driving?" And the guy said, 'well you get used to it.'

"That just kind of hit me. How can we get used to that? We should be doing something about that. And then it wasn't long after that, that I was approached by FAO to be an ambassador, and I said: 'absolutely'. Because, how can we have an attitude in our country, or in our world where we say, 'oh I will get used to it,' and just step over it and keep going. It just shouldn't happen."

Lewis' experience in India made him realize a lot of work needs to be done to change people's perceptions about poverty and hunger. He also realized that his incredibly successful athletic career could help to achieve some of that change.

"Well, people listen," said Lewis of the affect his athletic success has had on his fight against



Olympic athlete Carl Lewis believes changing people's perception of poverty and hunger is the first step to end problems. Photo: Carl Lewis PR

hunger. "I think that there are a couple of things. Number one, obviously, the fame, it brings people to the party, and that's a great thing that the hard work and dedication did."

Credibility

Lewis feels that his life experience as a professional sportsman has shaped the way he looks at the world. His athletic career allowed him to travel around the world and visit countries most people never get the opportunity to see.

"I have seen the world, you know. I have been to the smallest places in Vietnam, and I have been to India, and I have been to the wealthiest countries in the world; the United States, and I have seen poverty and hunger here in this country."

"I think that it brings some credibility. It's kind of funny in a way that all of those accolades also took me to Poona, India, which is one of the poorest places you could imagine, or way out into the country side outside of Ho Chi Minh City. So I think that it's more than just the fame. Everybody knows who I am and they will listen because they saw me on television. I got the opportunity to go to those places and see hunger and see how it affects people. And also to see how it affects us, even in a developed nation."

Armed with this awareness, Lewis has set out to open people's eyes to the realities of hunger. He hopes, he said, to change the

global attitudes about how poverty affects the world.

"The biggest thing for me is global attitude. I know that I butt up against people a lot in America with their 'Well, I have mine' attitude. Whether it is welfare or food stamps here in the United States, (the attitude is one of) 'I have mine, and the poor should just work, they're just lazy'", said Lewis.

"But actually, the reality is that even a lot of people that think they have it all are one paycheck away or one step away (from being homeless)."

"A lot of developing countries haven't been treated well because ultimately, in a lot of cases, they're actually being used. Their resources are being used, and they've been abused and then dumped."

"What I would like is our global attitude to change. A world where we say: 'You know what, if one person's hungry in the world, we're all hungry. And if I am the wealthiest person, then I care about it.'"

"There are so many very wealthy people doing wonderful things, like the Gates Foundation and Bill Clinton. Bill Gates is the wealthiest man in the world and he works tirelessly to do things for other people. I wish that everyone would take his lead, that wealthy people would take his lead or Warren Buffett's lead, or take the lead of Bill Clinton, or take the lead of people who are

really giving back. That's how we solve the problem, it's attitude adjustment."

Self-sufficient

According to FAO estimates, there were over 1 billion undernourished individuals in 2009. Although Lewis realizes that changing people's perception about how poverty affects the world would be a big step in the fight against hunger, he also acknowledges that more needs to be done, such as working to make poorer countries more self-sufficient.

"I think one of the things we need to do -and what the FAO is focusing more on- is helping people to become self-sufficient. Instead of dropping food all the time, we need to think: how can we help them grow their own food? How can we help them develop their own areas?"

"I think that's the biggest issue, and it is a huge benefit for everyone in the world if countries can become more self-sufficient. Instead of giving them food, give them feed and fertilizer. Then all of a sudden we are helping them become self-sufficient, and then we can move on to the next group, and then just check back up."

MDG Champion

Earlier this year the UN called upon Lewis to help promote the Millennium Development Goals by becoming an 'MDG Champion'. In September he attended a high profile summit in New York, where even the likes of Bill and Hillary Clinton were present. Whilst the experts discussed the progress of the MDG's in the run up to their deadline in 2015, Lewis gained an insight in the enormity of the tasks.

"I think the biggest thing is that we are marching, but we're not marching fast enough because there is still a billion people hungry," said Lewis. "But it was an honor to be a part of it, sitting in meetings and discussing issues, not just making appearances but actually discussing issues and ideas that can make a difference."

"We have to make the unobtainable goals obtainable. That's what the Millennium Conference showed me. It is creating information for the general public that

didn't understand the issues. And I think that people came out of that summit saying: 'I want to be more involved', because now they have a clear understanding of what we're doing."

The strength to stand up

Although today Lewis is using his knowledge and influence in the fight against hunger, he has always believed in standing up for what is right. During his career, Lewis fought to make his sport professional, and wasn't afraid to talk about athletes wages, or even drugs. He says he acquired the strength to stand up for these many causes from his parents.

Lewis was born in Birmingham, Alabama (USA) in 1961. His parents were heavily involved in the American civil rights movement and even considered Dr. Martin Luther King a family friend.

"When I was being raised my parents were heavily involved in the civil rights movement. They marched down the streets and they were involved in the hosing. Fortunately for them they had a car during the bus strike, so they were drivers, not walkers," said Lewis. "They also had friends there, Dr. King was a family friend."

"What they taught me first of all is that education is important, because you have to have the knowledge to make decisions. Secondly, do what you think is right. Do what you believe in, and when you do that you're going to have criticism, you're going to be attacked because a lot of people are not willing to do what's right."

Although Lewis was just a child during the height of the civil rights movement, the influence of his parents would have a lasting effect on both his personal and professional life.

"When I came into my sport I realized that amateur athletics was technically glorified slavery. (It was) wealthy people playing games with people, and they got all of the money. The athletes had no control because they were broke. They went where they were told to go, they did what they were told to do."

see LEWIS, page 14

An athlete remembered for more than his medals

LEWIS, from page 12

"So my idea was that, if I am an athlete and a professional basketball, baseball, or whatever player gets paid to do his job, why shouldn't we be? So therefore I really fought on that issue."

Drugs

Similarly, he says he fought to get performance enhancing substances out of the sport. He says: "When it came to the drug issue, I realized that was going to take our sport down. But the best thing out of all of it is that here we are — 14 years after my retirement and my last Olympics — and people still talk about those issues."

"Most of the people walk up to me and they say, 'oh you won nine gold medals, but gosh, you're the one that was one of the leaders that made the sport professional, or you were one of the ones that talked about drugs.' They don't just sit there and recite out my races. They actually remember what is relevant."

Carl Lewis Foundation

Along with his own legacy, Lewis' parents also had an effect on his future charity work. Growing up Lewis watched his parents start the track club and become involved in many aspects of

the community. That influence translated into his many charitable contributions during his career, and today the Carl Lewis Foundation, which focuses on physical education, family involvement, and the arts.

"The foundation for me was just an extension of what I believed in during my entire career," Lewis said. "I was involved in charity work throughout my professional life and then when I retired I had more time to start my own foundation." The aim was to help kids who were not staying active and healthy. He tries to get children back into physical exercise and at the same time involve their families to convince them of the needs for sports and a healthy lifestyle.

Veganism

Hand in hand with his charitable approach, Lewis decided to embrace veganism. At the time, he made many headlines with his seemingly controversial decision to start eating a vegan diet whilst being a top class athlete.

Looking back, he said, "I did it for one specific reason. As a long jumper, weight is a huge issue. You can imagine trying to carry this weight through the air. So, at the time I ate everything I wanted, but I kind of starved myself to get

my weight down, and I realized that was an unhealthy diet. So when I talked to people and did some research, they advised me to go to a vegan diet."

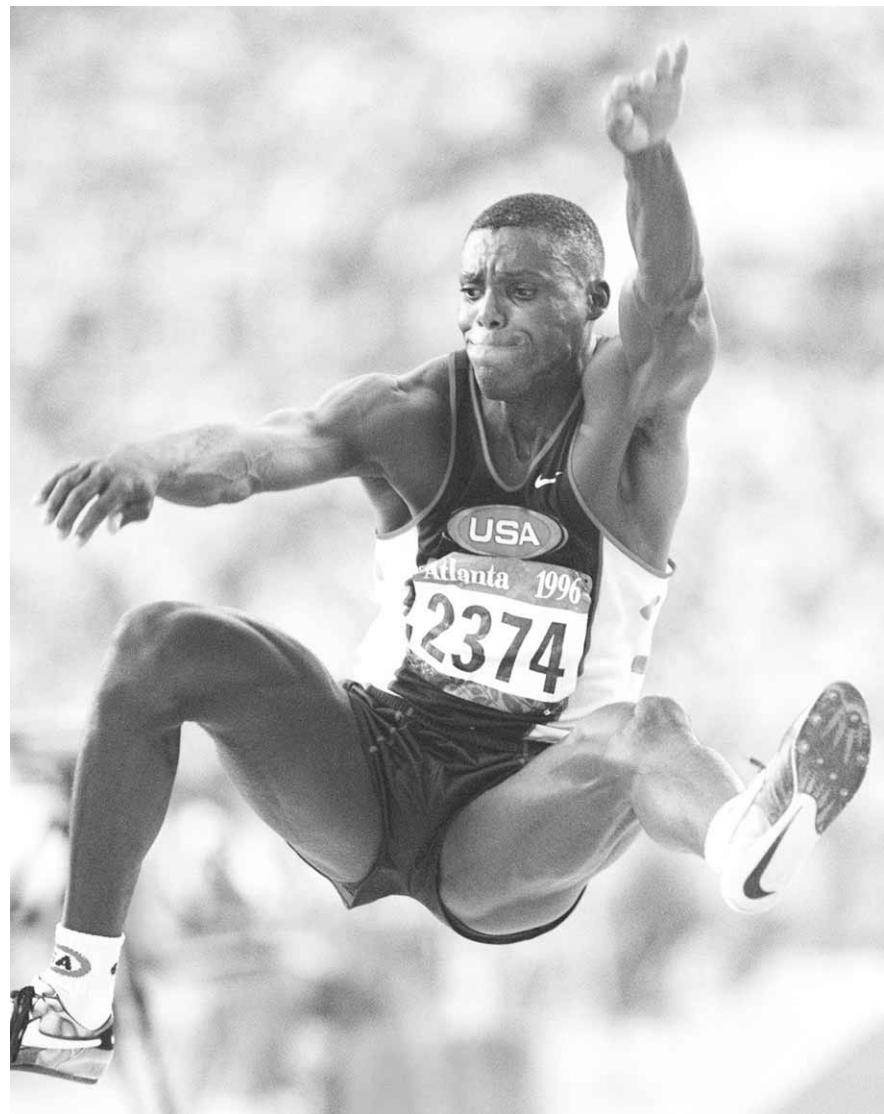
Of the effect becoming a vegan had on his athletic career, he said, "All of my personal bests came while I was on this diet at 30 years old. But, it is a challenge to the average person. I was fortunate enough to have a cook. The only problem that I had was that once she started cooking, once I became a vegan, the house was dirty because she was cooking all day."

Educating the public

If anything, his career as a changemaker has convinced Lewis of the importance of changing people's perception towards issues of poverty, homelessness and hunger. He believes that in order to create change, the wider public needs to be educated on the issues; something street papers around the world pride themselves on.

"I think that we need to focus on getting information out to everyone. We need to make sure we create the opportunities to reach out to all."

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www.streetnewsservice.org



Lewis dazzled the crowds at the 1996 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia.
Photo: Carl Lewis PR



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Late blooming funny man follows his instincts

GERVAIS, continued from page 13
that fanbase is something Gervais and Merchant discussed when BBC Two series Extras was on hold.

"We sat down and thought - what did people like (about The Office)? We didn't know when we did it. So we thought - f**k what they like, let's do what we like," said Gervais, arms flailing. "I don't know - nor care - for my demographic. And I don't care who likes this."

Yet Gervais is pie hot on the power of Pilkington's universal appeal.

"Bob in Yorkshire is watching and thinking - he's right! Some middle-class people are thinking - oh god, he's an idiot, he hates everything foreign, and others are thinking - that's so cruel, Ricky and Steve are bullying an idiot savant," he said, leaning back, his feet now up on the Melamine desk.

Gervais describes Pilkington, whom he and Merchant first met at radio station Xfm, as the "funniest man ever", followed by Laurel and Hardy "if you're talking about professional."

Why? Because they are precarious, he explains, and because they understood that funny is about empathy. The yellow Post-it

notes covering the wall reveal the stream-of-consciousness scribbles of the next Gervais-Merchant collaboration - a series with dwarf actor Warwick Davis called Life's Too Short. It follows the day-to-day life of a 3ft 6in 31-year-old who runs a dwarf agency.

"Warwick's the funniest guy I know," said Gervais. "This isn't just about him being short - it's to do with him having short-man complex. It's about his opinions and how he wants to live life."

Gervais talks about his characters with pure sentimentality. "I love them," he announces. "The worst thing David Brent did was to confuse respect with popularity, and really all he needed was a hug."

Whatever the reaction, Gervais' characters are fastidiously observed. He feels the relationship with Pilkington has "turned into a social experiment", and dismisses the suggestion Pilkington is in any way scripted.

"Karl's brilliant," he said. "He's got a brilliant mind. He's like an artist, he sees the world differently. It's fascinating to live in his world."

The perfectionism he employs, he puts down in part to coming to the business

late. It's made Gervais a workaholic and protective of his material and his time, saving his "pile of goodwill and my column inches and my face time on television for something I'm proud of and in charge of and that's mine".

He then reels off the projects that are "his" - The Office, Extras, Flanimals, his stand-up, and two films. The rest - the film cameos; Sesame Street; The Simpsons - "I could do 1,000 of those and they wouldn't enhance or detract from my career, but the things that are mine I do 100 percent."

Gervais bites his lip when I bring up the mixed reception to his high-concept Hollywood rom-com The Invention of Lying, in which everyman hero character Mark Bellinson discovers the gift of lying, and in the process that religion is one great big whopper.

It's the first atheist rom-com. It's exactly how I wanted it to turn out. I got my own way," he said, reassuring himself that he mustn't worry about what other people think.

Selling out is one thing, he said, but selling out and failing is another. "If I only please myself, if I only know that those things on

the shelf are exactly how I wanted them, then I'm bulletproof."

"If that sounds like smugness it's not. It's the only way I can be," he added.

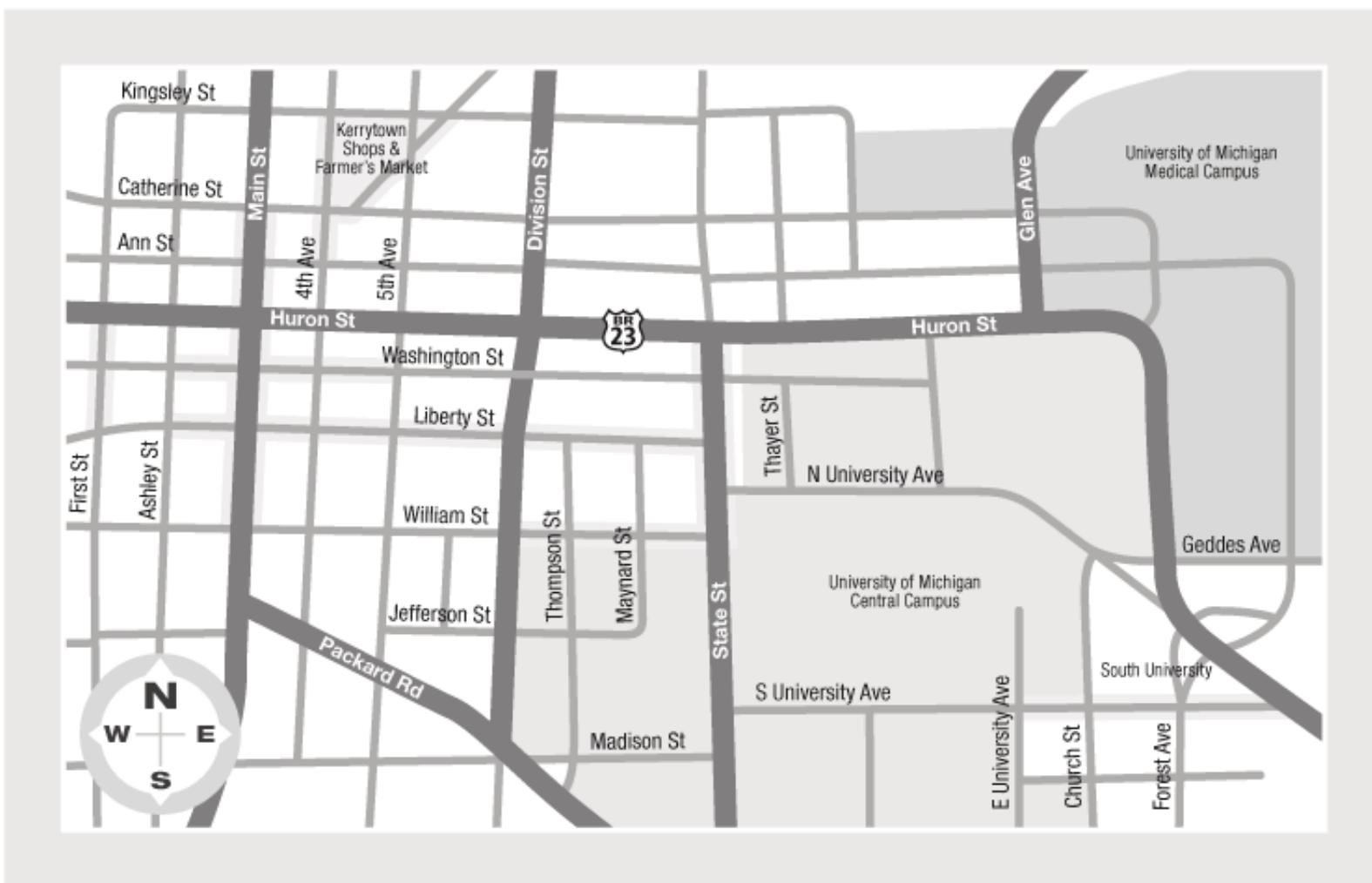
That Gervais' unremarkable office, above a Hampstead estate agent, is a hotbed of creativity both of them share is hard to imagine. Gervais is equally dumbfounded at why his partnership with Merchant has endured. They work in an unusual way, he explains. For every idea, there's one veto and it's out.

"There's no compromise. If I come up with an idea that's shit, we don't change it. It's out." The result is that they are left with something they're both completely happy with.

Whatever the reason, Gervais said he's hit a point of contentment. "It's all about where you are in your life," he said. "Forget your knees aching and having less time on the Earth. It's about being happy, and you can do that at any time - even in your 70s and 80s."

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Ann Arbor City Map



Ann Arbor City Map

What are you doing New Year's Eve?

All dressed up with nowhere to go? Here are a few ideas for places to be and be seen on New Year's Eve:

Conor O'Neill's Traditional Irish Pub

Dec. 31, Irish Toast at 7 p.m., DJ at 10 p.m., Toast at Midnight, Breakfast at 1 a.m.

Where: 318 S. Main St., Ann Arbor
734-665-2968
<http://www.conoroneills.com/annarbor/>

Admission: \$60/person; call for reservations, 734-665-2968. 21+

Four-course meal with your choice of filet mignon and lobster tail, salmon, rack of lamb, or a vegetarian option. Also included are 2 champagne toasts, one at 7 p.m. for the Irish new year and one at midnight. They will have a DJ starting at 10 p.m. and a breakfast buffet at 1 a.m.

Pride at Necto

Dec. 31, Doors open at 7 p.m. in the Red Room. Main floor doors at 9 p.m.

Where: 516 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor
734-994-5436

Admission: Ticket price will be progressive beginning at \$10 early bird & progressing to \$25 at doors. Pre-sale early bird tickets will be available at the club and at eventbrite.com

18 and over are welcome.

It only happens every six years. Pride, a primarily gay night established in 1985, will be celebrating New Years Eve 2011. This year's theme is "Winter Garden Party." It maybe cold outside, but the dance floor will be hot and the club will be decked out as a winter jungle garden party. DJ Jace spins High Energy Dance in the Main Room and DVJ Mark plays Retro, Pop & Hot in the Red Room.

Brew Year's Eve at Arbor Brewing Company

Dec. 31, 8 p.m.-1 a.m. 21+

Where: 114 E. Washington St., Ann Arbor
734-213-1393
<http://www.arborbrewing.com/>

Join your friends at ABC for a casual, no hassle Brew Year's Eve celebration. To celebrate they will release a different keg of small-batch celebratory beer every hour from 8:30-11:30 p.m., dinner specials, and musical entertainment. The last release to ring in the New Year is the Terminator (released at Midnight), so beware!

Baker's Ball Fundraiser: A New Year's Eve Celebration to Benefit Growing Hope at Zingerman's Bakehouse

Dec. 31, 8 p.m.-1 a.m.

Where: 3711 Plaza Dr., Ann Arbor



734-761-7255

<http://www.bakewithzing.com/>

Admission:

\$100 - register online

<http://www.bakewithzing.com/>

100% of the proceeds will benefit Growing Hope of Washtenaw County, a group dedicated to helping people improve their lives and communities through gardening and healthy food access. To learn more visit www.growinghope.net

Give 2011 a warm welcome and bake for a good cause! You'll spend the evening in this hands-on class room along side other food lovers and our passionate instructors baking great pizza, handmade strudel and other snacks. Then enjoy eating them while you count down to midnight. Price includes some hands-on instruction, recipes to take home, and all your food and beverage during the celebration. They'll be hosting 50 students for this event, so it will be a little different from our usual classes.

New Year's Eve Blues Masquerade with Lady Sunshine and the X Band at Guy Hollerin's

Dec. 31 at 8 p.m.

Where: 3600 Plymouth Road Ann Arbor (in the Holiday Inn), Ann Arbor
734-769-9800
<http://www.hiannarbor.com/dining.php>

Admission: \$5 Cover

New Years Eve Bash at Cavern Club

Dec. 31, 8 p.m.-4 a.m.

Where: 210 S. First St., Ann Arbor
734-332-9900
www.cavernclubannarbor.com

Admission: \$39.95/person 21+

All Night Dinner Buffet; Champagne at Midnight; Party Hats & Horns. Entertainment: Killer Flamingos in the Cavern Club; DJ Mixwell in the Millennium Club; and Stoo's Karaoke in Circus Bar & Billiards.

The Fred Eaglesmith Travelling Show at The Ark

Dec. 31 at 8 p.m.

Where: 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor
734-761-1451
www.theark.org

Tickets: \$25

Spend New Year's Eve with Ontario's roots-country original! He's going to raise the roof, and you can raise a glass. There are other songwriters who populate their creations with small-time crooks, small-town loners, and working-class heroes. But Fred Eaglesmith's songs stand out for their edge of desperation and their raucous yet bemused humor -- and for the incredible energy of his live shows.

Friday Happy Hour: Drivin' Sideways - Thank God 2010 Is Almost Over! at Live at PJ's

Dec. 31, 6:30-9 p.m.

Where: 102 S. First St., Ann Arbor
734-623-1443
<http://www.liveandgracies.com/>

Admission: Free 21+

New Year's Eve - Welcome to 2011! at Weber's Inn

Dec. 31, starting at 7 p.m.

Where: 3050 Jackson Road, Ann Arbor
734-769-2500
<http://webersinn.com/packages/newYearEve.asp>

Admission:

Two choices for New Year's Eve Party Packages: Complete overnight packages start at \$339 per couple. Dinner & Party packages only are \$219 per couple.

Couples who purchase an overnight New Year's Eve package by Nov. 30, 2010, can stay the night before or the night after New Year's Eve for FREE! The New Year's Eve party at Weber's has sold out for 28 consecutive years - and rooms are going fast!

21+; Formal attire encouraged.



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Join us in supporting local organizations that are vital to those in need.

- **Rockin for the Hungry, Dec. 1 - 5.** Volunteers and radio personalities from Ann Arbor's 107.1 will be "freezin' for a reason" at Food Gatherers' largest annual outdoor food and fund drive. Broadcast live from new event location Kroger on South Maple Road, you can participate by dropping off food or cash donations, purchasing a ready-made bag of food to donate, or by making a donation at the register.
- **24 Hour Soccerthon, 6:00 pm Dec. 10 - 6:00 pm Dec. 11.** Groups of 12 or more play 6 v 6 at Wide World of Sports for 1 hour. \$200 minimum per group or \$10 per person for groups larger than 20. Benefits the homeless soccer team, SSPort. To register or for more information, call 734-222-3768 or 734-368-6786.
- Whole Foods is teaming up with Food Gatherers to help "Bag Hunger" this winter! Bag Hunger gift tags will be available for purchase at both Ann Arbor locations for \$5, \$10 or \$20, providing healthy food to families in need right here in Washtenaw County.